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MRS. L. G. C. asks:—"Has anything of an ornamental character ever been devised for hiding the unsightliness of scorched and defaced baking dishes? I cannot succeed in folding a napkin deftly around dishes; I am not able to afford a silver-plated pudding dish, and an ordinary baking dish is so soon scarred and browned as to be unrepresentable." A very beautiful and convenient piece of fancy work is a knitted dish cover. The idea came originally from our Canadian neighbors. The following is a handsome design. For making, use No. 12 or No. 16 four-thread ball knitting cotton, and 11, No. 14 steel knitting needles. Cast on 78 stitches on each of five needles, having in all 390 stitches. First round, knit 4, slip 1, narrow by knitting 2 together, and pass slipped stitch over; knit 5, thread over, knit 1, thread over, knit 4, slip, narrow, etc., continuing thus to the end of the round, and repeat until 5 rounds are knitted; and then knit 3 plain rounds. This forms the pattern of the work. Repeat the pattern, reversing the order of the knitting with each repetition of the pattern, or so that the places of the holes and the narrowing shall be reversed. The pattern seven times repeated, omitting the three plain rounds on the last pattern, is required for the cover of a dish of the usual depth. The wrong side of the knitting is made the right side of the dish cover, the result being a heavy lace-like web of diminutive raised points showing a leaf on each point in eyelets. Run in at top and bottom a small twisted cord of the cotton, or a fine ribbon finished at each end with a small tassel. Draw the cord at the bottom to suit the size of the dish, and that at the top slightly to overlap the edge. Be very careful in beginning the work not to let the stitches get twisted on the needles. It is therefore best to use only five needles for them for the first knitting of the pattern, and then divide them so as to run ten needles, with the extra one for the right hand. Knitting, which was so long relegated to old ladies, coming into play for socks and scarfs for charity fairs, is again a fashionable pastime, and is considered a desirable accomplishment.

MISS FLORENCE DEAN wishes to know if there is "anything later than momie cloth, linen damask, and butcher's linen, suitable for table covers, bureau scarfs, lambrequins, anti-macassers, etc., for bed-room furnishing; and what is the character of the embroidery."—The novelty of the moment in a material for embroidery, is Bolton sheeting. It is soft, thick, unbleached cotton fabric of twilled texture, and is worked in outline or tracery stitch, with very stout, soft, flax rope silk, or in couching stitch with worsted crewel and silk thread, generally in conventional designs. It is used not only for the purposes mentioned, but for bed spreads, curtains, and covers for sofa pillows. A fine specimen of the work is shown in a table-cover wrought in a design of small wild sunflowers in the colors of nature, finished with a fringe in which are introduced several shades of peacock blue, Turkey red, coral pinks, and crushed strawberry color. Conventional designs may be wrought irrespective of nature's suggestions in colors, and with the exercise of good taste may be made highly artistic.

MRS. WILLIAM B. NORTHCOTE writes: "I am preparing to spend the summer in the country. Can you suggest means by which I can find amusement and utilize a portion of the time in making something for house decoration. Though strictly rustic, I would like that it should be artistic and unique. My house is suburban, entered by a square hall at one corner, and as it presents a bare appearance to me, an idea in reference to correcting this bareness would please me." There has been a surfeit of decoration with autumn leaves. You could have nothing more pleasing to the sight, of a rustic character, in your hall, than a lichen vase filled with dried grasses. For the frame work of the vase use a piece of pine scantling three inches square and about twelve inches tall, with the base formed of two pieces of board, six and nine inches square. Fasten the smaller square to the stem-piece with screws, getting the exact centers of the pieces, and the larger to the smaller square in like manner. For the urn or bowl use a stout, firm, palm leaf hat, of the kind formerly worn in the country by schoolboys, or make a hat of similar shape of pasteboard, and fasten this securely with carpet tacks on the top of the stem, taking care that the center of the crown should be placed directly on the center of the stem. This is important, in order that the balance may be preserved. Gather

the lichens, otherwise known as rock-mosses and tree-mosses, from boulders in the woods, stone fences, the trunks of old cherry trees and the roofs of old houses; and gather also green mosses from clefts in the rocks, the trunks of trees and moist spots in the woods. Dry these in a dark closet, and when dry, thoroughly encrust the vase, attaching the lichens and mosses with common glue, pleasingly intermixing the gray and the green, with an occasional snail-shell, if luckily found. For filling the vase, secure bunches of oats, rye and wheat when perfectly formed but still green, with any pretty marsh grasses that come to hand, and dry also in a dark closet. When filling the vase, have an old-fashioned two quart glass jar, bunch up in the hand as many of the grasses as will fill the jar, place it in the hat, and then set grasses around so as perfectly to hide the jar. A deserted bird's nest, in which nestles a stuffed wren or a blue jay, may be laid in among the grasses, while a fringe of *tillandsie*, or the hanging moss of the South, confined around the edges of the vase and veiling the stem, adds greatly to its beauty. It would be wise to prepare the mosses and grasses while in the country, but to defer glueing them on until you are at home, because of more ease of transportation. A few plumes of the pampas grass for sale in the streets, can be added at pleasure, and the solidago or golden rod, dried in a dark closet, will be preserved in color, and will last several years, the hint suggesting also its appearance in the rustic vase.

JENNIE CARTER writes:—"Will you aid me in a device for a home-made chair. My father has taken a cottage in the country for a summer home, and as he is not a rich man, we propose to make our house as cosy and inviting as possible in contrivances of our own workmanship." A unique and artistic chair may be made of a dry goods box, securing one of the proper dimensions. Let the length of the box form the back of the chair. For the seat of the chair, have the box sawed down to proper height, using one end piece for the seat, while this may be attached as a flap, the box underneath for use for a book, a magazine, or light work to hand. Cover the posterior of the back smoothly with *crétone* of pattern as nearly resembling damask as can be secured; make a thin hair pillow, or pad, and tack on the front, covering smoothly with the *crétone*, tack the *crétone* in box plaits around the sides and front of the seat; make a thick hair pillow or cushion for the seat and cover smoothly, trimming around with worsted tassel fringe of solid color matching some distinct color in the *crétone*, and finish on all the edges and angles with a beading of plush or other suitable material, secured by tacks with large brass heads set about an inch apart. A corner chair may be made by leaving two sides of the box with the seat, a right angle in front; and an artistic fancy covers the chair with burlaps, finishing with beading of plush in cardinal red or sapphire blue, secured with tacks of large brass or silvered heads.

"AN INTERESTED READER" says:—"Do tell me something about making picture frames suitable for copies in steel engraving of Landseer's animal pieces, and frames for flower pieces in colors." The writer we suspect is a lady, from the delicate perfume which issues from her note, and its dainty penmanship. For your Landseer pictures, we would advise frames of polished chestnut or oak, beaded on the inner edge with manilla rope, which you can give a coat of gilt paint, if you like, while the natural grass-color we think in better taste. For your flower pieces, have frames of polished white wood, draped from corner to corner across the top with a scarf of bolting gauze, upon which you can paint or embroider a floral design to correspond in a measure with the picture, securing the scarf at each corner with a bow of ribbon, or running it through gilt slides, the ends being fringed or bordered with Oriental or fine torchon lace. Piece lace, of a delicate character, edged with bordering lace, makes a tasteful drapery for picture frames, with finish of ribbon bows, especially for the bed-room decoration of young ladies.

FANNY FAIRWELL wishes to know if there is any new and pretty idea for a whisk-broom holder, as she wishes to make one for a philopone present. The latest fancy in a whisk-broom holder that has come to our notice appears in one made of two circular pieces of card-board, six inches in diameter, covered with *écru* linen drilling. The front piece has embroid-

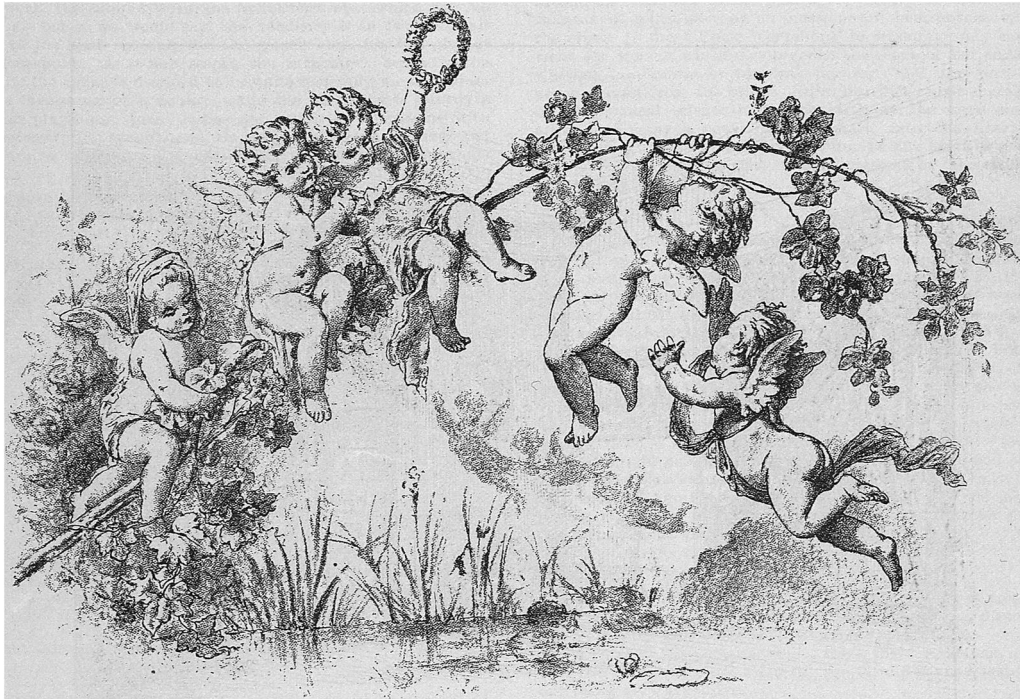
## THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER.

ered on it a sheaf of cat-tails, and is crossed diagonally by a band of satin ribbon in dark cardinal red, an inch-and-a-half wide. A ribbon bow, and a loop by which the article is hung is set at the top, with a bow at the bottom as a finish—the disks being conveniently sewed together.

MINNIE S. asks:—"Which would you advise as a lambrequin of one's own work, one in crochet or *macramé*? I wish to make a wedding present to a young friend who is soon to be married, and as I am not able to purchase anything handsome, the next best thing I can do is to expend my own talent in making something that she will prize of handiwork." The *macramé* work for the purpose is the handsomest by all means. Although it seems in temporary disfavor, it is one of the richest and most effective laces for furnishing purposes that has ever been wrought. But do not fail to do your work with flax twine. This, compared with cotton twine, is what gold thread is compared with tinsel. We would like to see an active interest revived in *macramé* laces.

FROM "EULALIE" is the inquiry:—"Is there any new fancy in work bags?" One of the prettiest in the recent fancies in the work bag, appears in a combination of velvet brocade and surah satin, embroidered with gold tinsel. An eighth of a yard of black velvet brocade of floriated design has the design outlined

ful, should I decide to utilize the skirts of several dresses that belonged to my mother and my aunt?" We have seen hangings of the character alluded to in your note. In every instance they have appeared as portieres or door draperies. They are too heavy and cumbersome for window draperies. For making, cut strips of the silk skirts, of which you speak, from three-fourths an inch to an inch in width. It is well to reserve black, dark brown, dark green, dark blue, or any dark neutral, if you have it, for the grounding color. If among the skirts on hand you have any of bright or evening colors, preserve them intact to be used in striping; but in case you have no bright colored silks on hand use the *Diamond Dyes* for securing the colors desired, remembering to employ the dyes of strong colors for the darker colors required, while silks in white or delicate tints may be dyed any color with these valuable dyes. General advice in reference to the use of these dyes is needless, as directions come with each separate color. If you wish your hangings striped (and what is known as Roman striping, effected by the use of several strong colors, alternating a broad stripe in grounding color, is very elegant in these hangings), make separate hanks of each color you wish used; while what is termed "hit and miss" effect, is secured by sewing the stripes together promiscuously, and of any length, from a fourth of a yard to the full width and more of the silk, just as the pieces may come to hand.



with the tinsel couched on, this overlying the bottom of a bag substantially made of surah in a vivid shade of old gold, an inch or two more than a quarter of a yard in depth. Across the bottom is a fringe of gilt crices, and old-gold satin ribbon an inch-and-a-half in width, draws the bag at the top. Pretty bags are also made of silk fichus or neckerchiefs. A round piece of card-board about five inches in diameter, is covered with silk of suitable color, and laid immediately on the center of the wrong side of the kerchief, is hemmed on neatly. The corners, set each with a bell or loose tassel, are turned outward, and a casing or tuck describing a circle, has run in it a drawstring of ribbon or silk braid, the ends finished, if liked, with tassels. These bags may be also used for scenting parlors and dainty bed-rooms, filled with batting sprinkled with sachet powder. Frangipani is an agreeable perfume.

MRS. JAMES L. NAGLE:—"I reside in the West, so far remote from large cities that any information that can be appropriated in reference to the home work which tends to lend a smile to the fitting up and furnishing our house is greedily accepted. Will you tell me through your valuable journal whether you have seen the hangings of which we have heard, made of strips of old silk? and how, if all your silks should be of somber colors, they can be dyed so as to be bright and cheer-

ful. After being cut, dyed and sewed, in the manner of old-fashioned carpet rags, the silk is sent to the most convenient loom, and the hangings appear loosely-wove, with the threads of the warp in close clusters about half an inch apart. A very handsome portiere is in grounding of black, with a Roman stripe ten inches wide, nine inches from both the top and the bottom. A second portiere, with grounding of an old silk skirt in navy blue, has Roman stripes eight inches wide, alternating grounding stripes of the blue silk of the same width from the top to the bottom. A pair of door draperies of "hit and miss" effect, with myrtle green as the most distinct color, has a stripe ten inches from the top and bottom in dark rich red, from the madder lake of the *Diamond Dyes*; and in certain of our country fairs, we have seen as many as a dozen examples of this elegant, economical and effective effort of the home workshop.

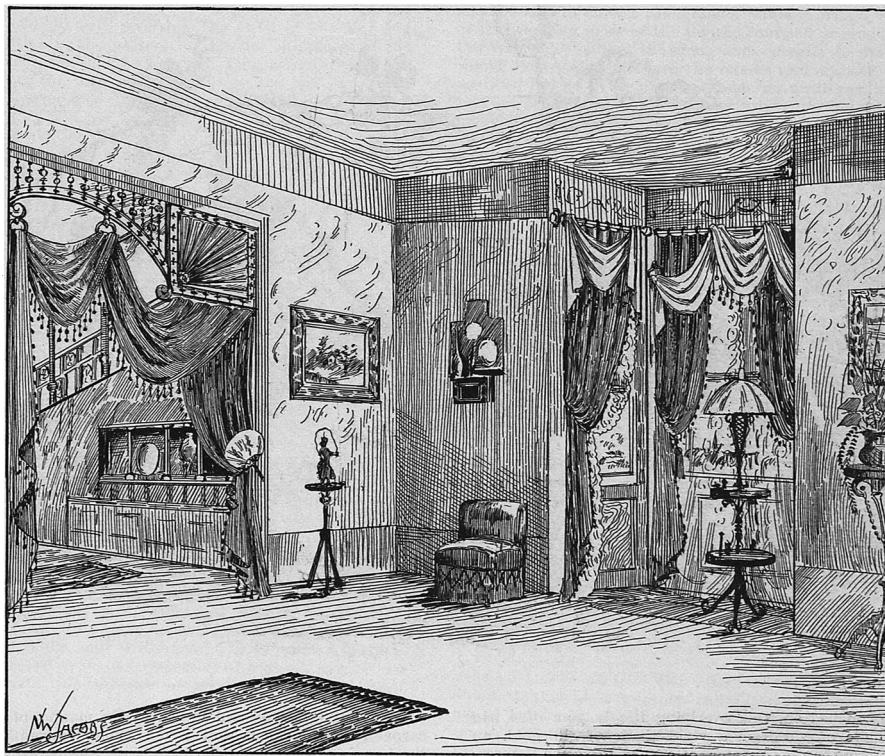
MRS. VIVIAN L. MOFFET:—"In reply to your inquiries in reference to home-made rugs in imitation to those of Smyrna manufacture, we might recommend to you the materials in wool canvas with patterns that come for the purpose, but that you propose to utilize skirts of old woollen gowns, and odds and ends of flannels on hand. We have seen very clever imitations of Oriental rugs made of bunches or tassels of strips of cloth knitted in. For the web, stout linen twine or linen *macramé* thread

## THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER.

is used, and long wooden or whalebone needles about the size of goose-quills. The knitter may easily devise a pattern, making the figures in the colors designed to be introduced, and keeping the pattern before her it is easy to follow it. It is well that there should be a border of solid color—say black for instance—then within this all around a band of white, gray or red, with the somewhat irregular figures in the center seen in the Eastern rugs. Beginning, cast on stitches sufficient for the width required for the rug, and turning knit across plain. In the next two gather up several of the woolen strips, cut half an inch wide and about three inches long, and holding the bunch firmly, knit in very closely, repeating in every stitch; or, if it should prove too thick, knit a bunch of the stripes in every second stitch. The next row must of course be plain knitting—the bunches of strips inserted in every second row, and all showing on one side. When finished, the work must be cut down or shaven smooth with very sharp shears, but not deeply; and the rug may be lined with a piece of burlap, or, what is better, with a piece of tapestry carpeting. Very pretty rugs are made with the outer border of black, an inner border of red, and center filled in with the bunches of strips in mixed colors. But as it is difficult to use needles more than about twenty-four inches long, and as the work is too thick to push up very closely on the needles, these knitted rugs can scarcely be made more than about thirty inches wide. They are however very handsome for doorways, the front of washstands, dressing bureaus, and similar

nickel paint. All these frames can be easily made in the home workshop and much expense can be saved, as they cannot be said to be cheap at the dealers. Another pretty fancy picture frame for ladies' boudoirs and bedrooms is in plain richly-grained wood—oak, chestnut or maple, for instance—simply treated with oil or fine varnish, or given a coat of metallic paint, and then draped across the top. A frame of curled maple finished with varnish, containing an aquarelle of flowers, may be draped with a scarf of bolting gauze, the ends showing a design of the same flowers painted or in embroidery, and finished by fringing at the ends with a ruffle of light Oriental or Newport lace. The drapery across the top should be very slightly festooned and secured at the upper corners with bows of ribbon or bright French gilt rings. There is great chance for the display of artistic taste in drapery effects on picture frames.

META:—"Have you seen anything new lately in delicate table scarfs? And can you furnish a hint in reference to *mouchoir* cases?" Very beautiful and dainty table scarfs are now made of Chinese silks, and the soft American silks in plain colors, with ends of chamois skin in cutwork or showing a *motif* in painting. The finish is the tasseled fringe hung on cords. An illustration in a table scarf is of Chinese silk in fresh rose color, the chamois ends showing a painted mat of variegated pansies, finished with rose colored tasseled fringe. A scarf in bright maize color, has a design of wheat, corn-flowers, and



purposes. They are moreover speedily made, and serve an admirable purpose for using up the woollens which sometimes accumulate in the household. Should these woollens be in undesirable colors, the Diamond Dyes can be brought into use.

MISS E. L. BATES asks for information in regard to frames for pictures copied from the French *aquarelles*, intended for a lady's boudoir. We know of no frames for the purpose more tasteful than those made of woods showing definite graining—chestnut for instance—given a single coat of metallic paint, shading more deeply from the inner to the outer edge. A very tasteful frame in memory in which was a charming landscape in water colors, has a frame of chestnut given a coat of metallic blue, of silvery tint on the inner and a sapphire tint on the outer edge. A second frame, given a coat of bronze paint, has tacked on each corner a square of Lincrusta, with the effect of delicate gilt moulding. Another tasteful frame of chestnut, three inches wide, given a coat of gold paint, has a half inch manilla rope on both the inner and outer edges, given a coat of

scarlet poppies on the chamois skin ends, with fringe in blue, scarlet and maize color. A scarf of Chinese silk in a medium shade of *ciel* blue, has the chamois skin ends in cutwork, the design outlined with gold paint, and here and there a little spray of forget-me-nots, and self-finished in the stamping. Painted and cutwork chamois skins also enter into the making of dainty *mouchoir* cases, workbags and parlor scentbags. When painted the chamois skin usually overlies one half of the *mouchoir* case, running diagonally from corner to corner, showing a spray of wild roses or apple blossoms, a bunch of pansies or other floral fancy, with a cut border outlined with beading of gold paint. When used in a cut design, the chamois skin overlies the entire creation, with the *appliqué* effect. The usual shape is oblong, about ten inches wide and seven inches deep, made with a pocket on each side, opening to the center, with lining of *marcelline* or Florence silk gilt to a sheet of wadding scented with violet, white rose, frangipani or some other popular sachet powder. Another pattern for a *mouchoir* case, is a half oval, the pockets opening to the center. The finish in either shape is ribbon



## THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER.

strings. These scarfs and *mouchoir* cases are beautiful and appropriate for holiday presents.

MRS. RANDALL F. MOORE :—"I have somewhere seen that bedspreads of embroidered Bolton sheeting are among the late fancies in ladies' handiwork. Can you tell me something about them, and the nature of the embroidery?" Bolton sheeting comes in stamped designs for bedspreads. These designs are generally what are known in decorative art as conventional, or dependent upon pleasing lines rather than imitative of nature, and a late fancy applies a color in suitable interstices of the design, so that the design when wrought has the effect of applied cutwork. The embroidery is done in the outline stitch with the flax silk threads; or it is done with a cord couched on with a buttonhole stitch with Barbour's finer flax silks, or with fadeless silks. When finished, the spread must be carefully dampened and laid aside "to give," as laundresses say, and then laid on a soft blanket covered with a sheet; it must be ironed on the wrong side perfectly dry. Much depends, indeed, upon the ironing to press out the embroidery in the cord-like relief that so greatly enhances its richness of effect. Yet it is well to add, that care should be taken lest the color painted on the sheeting fade or run from the dampening process. Should the color fade or run, the ironing must be done dry with an iron not hot enough to scorch.

TO THE LADIES exercised in reference to the light carpenter's work, the cabinet work, the upholstery, etc., which may be done at home, we would say the tendency is in favor for all work of the kind not only for the youths but for the girls of the household. As it now seems, the carpenter's bench in the attic or the cellar is destined to be quite generally an addendum in the furnishing of a house; while the scroll-saw is already a popular plaything; many ladies are supplying themselves with the necessary implements and do their own re-upholstering, and the turning machine will doubtless find place in houses in which



LIBRARY.—CASES AND WINDOWS DRAPED WITH GARNET PLUSH TRIMMED WITH OLD GOLD. CURTAINS, EMBROIDERED TULLIE.

economy and profitable exercise are made to go hand in hand. There is wonderful fascination in the use of the square and the compass, in driving the plane and in boring a hole successfully; and many a woman with a nascent taste for the mechanic arts finds as much pleasure in skillfully driving a nail or setting a screw, as in a well executed piece of embroidery, or an artistically rendered composition in music. It may never be that we shall see women builders, but there is no reason why they should not become architects—certainly no reason why they should not amuse or employ themselves in much of the more simple joinery that is always more or less necessary in house fitting and furnishing. Woman's taste has done much toward the development of decorative art; why may not her hands as well as her head enter in the more serious and substantial efforts in decorative art which call into requisition woods and metals? Much of the work is light, and we may hope that the time is coming, through the encouragement that now appears, when we shall see American women workers in woods and metals as we now have women in medicine and in law. The handling of carpenter's tools, it is true, will hardly conduce to the natural smallness of "my lady's" hands, or to the rendering them more soft, but they will give greater muscular strength to the back, the shoulders and the arms; while the clever uses of the saw, the hammer, the chisel and the brad-awl are accomplishments which by no means detract from her importance or her womanliness. Every housewife, excepting the fortunate

few possessed of an overplus of worldly wealth, realizes at some time the convenience of being able to drive a nail in the absence of her husband from the house; and no less does she realize the spendthrift annoyance of having to pay to some Jack-of-all-trades from 25 cents to \$1.00 for the insignificant jobs which she instinctively feels she could do herself, with a toolchest at hand and a little practice in the use of the contents. Much of the carved woodwork that so delights us, brought from Switzerland, is done by the women—the out of doors employment in summer and the milder weeks of autumn and spring, and the indoors handiwork for the winter—and some of our American ladies impressed by the fact and with a desire for something to do at once useful and amusing, have taken lessons in wood carving from these dexterous peasants while journeying in ancient Helvetia, and supplied with the necessary woods and tools, have shown remarkable aptitude for the work. The success of experiments in woodwork by women in the Cincinnati establishment was abundantly attested by specimens of their work shown as long ago as the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia. The surprise is, in the underecurrent of clamor for fresh avenues of enterprise for women, that those understanding manual dexterity are so generally disregarded. Woman need unsex herself in no employment in which she may make either her mental or physical capabilities available, while the sentiment of sympathy and admiration is happily rapidly dying out for the interesting invalid and the fair trifler who is frequently no more than a compact of selfishness, or an outcome of heartlessness. It is the object of the "Home Workshop" to encourage any employment for woman which may broaden the scope of her endeavor, whether intellectual or physical, arguing that the one could never detract from the other. Elihu Burritt's grand conceptions of astronomical science had their birth at the forge and the anvil, and many a poem has sung itself into the heart and the brain of the writer to the rhythm of the knitting-needles, as they clicked in the busy fingers engaged in fabricating the husband's hose.

A NEW and easily adaptable article which can hardly fail to prove a welcome addition to minor modes of decoration is just being introduced by Messrs. Briggs & Co. It is a German production and is known as Leatherette. It resembles stamped and cut leather in a remarkable degree, possesses great lightness and durability, and can easily be adapted to a thousand uses. Thus far it is shown in trays, card receivers, brackets, wall pockets, fans, ornamental pencils, etc. All being capable of easy decoration, either by simple embroidery, or by the use of ribbons in various ways. In the card elsewhere published can be seen for instance, a small engraving of a waste-paper basket which is so light, that it can be sent post paid for seventy-five cents, and yet when decorated with bows of ribbon or embroidered with silk or worsted, becomes an article not only of use, but beauty. Another very charming application of the material is in the shape of perforated lamps through which the shining light produced a very novel and pretty effect.

PROFUSE and showy ornamentation of rooms is nowadays less frequent than formerly; there is a growing disposition for quiet effects where comfort has more sway. Even as to wall paper, the patterns which reach the largest sale and go into the best houses are reposeful, pretty, and in good taste without being very expensive.

CLOTH FOR BILLIARD TABLES.—Mr. G. F. Stead, of Skinner Lane Works, Leeds, has lately introduced certain improvements in the manufacture of cloth for billiard tables, bagatelle boards, and the like, the principal object being the production of a cotton cloth which has the appearance, feel, and finish of an ordinary woollen billiard table cloth, but costs much less to produce than the latter. To effect this object a cotton cloth is woven, care being taken to obtain fineness of grain, softness, and pliability, combined with the thickness or solidity and strength necessary for the effectual covering of a billiard table or bagatelle board. The cloth thus woven is fulled or milled and scoured, and then dyed preferably a green shade and subsequently finished. If required the surface of the cloth may be teased or raised so as to give it a certain amount of nap. In the manufacture of this improved cloth a warp or dyed cotton is employed to produce a cotton fabric possessing the necessary thickness and pliability for a billiard table cover, and a weft of fine soft spun dyed yarn is used in order to give a softness to the fabric, but other kinds of cotton weft may be used. The improved cotton cloth thus manufactured and treated is said to possess the appearance and feel of a cloth made from wool, and is also of greater strength, and consequently less liable to cut or tear when being stretched or played upon.